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SUBJECT: NIGERIA: 2001 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: STATE 198912

Classified by Ambassador Howard F. Jeter. Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) Post provides the following input for the 2001 Annual Terrorism Report. The information is keyed to the questions asked in reftel:

[1](#)A. (U) Civilian rule returned to Nigeria with the inauguration of Olusegun Obasanjo as President in May 1999. Since his inauguration, President Obasanjo has pursued an active international agenda commensurate with Nigeria's estimation of its role as a leader in both continental and world affairs. As such, Nigeria has established a balanced foreign policy that coincides with USG interests in many important aspects.

(U) Nowhere has the convergence of interests been more visible than with regard to terrorism. President Obasanjo's government was among the first to send condolences after the September 11 attacks. More importantly, Nigeria has steadfastly and publicly lent its diplomatic support to Coalition efforts against the Taliban and Al Queda despite the domestic political ramifications of being home to Africa's largest Muslim population. The GON has expressed support for UN Resolutions 1267, 1333 and 1368 and has initiated legislative and regulatory steps to shore up its anti-money laundering regime in order to fight terrorism. The New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), a new organization founded by Obasanjo and other African Heads of State, has condemned terrorism and called for concrete measures to be taken by African nations to combat the scourge. Nigeria is signatory to three UN counter-terrorism conventions and is reviewing other UN conventions with the view of acceding to these instruments.

(U) Nigeria also has taken on a leading role in making counter- terrorism an important issue in West Africa, the sub-region where Nigeria's diplomatic and political influence is most pronounced. President Obasanjo participated actively in the Conference on Terrorism hosted by Senegalese President Wade in Dakar this October. Nigeria has also been instrumental in placing terrorism high on the agenda of the December 2001 ECOWAS Heads of State Summit in Dakar.

[1](#)B. (U) There were no cases of thwarted terrorist attempts or of the dissolution of terrorist cells during the year.

[1](#)C. (U) Judiciary: There have been no known acts of terrorism nor criminal prosecutions of terrorists during the year. While current criminal law does not contain many specific anti- terrorism provisions, the penal code does proscribe acts of violence, which includes terrorism. Because President Obasanjo has given terrorism a high priority, the GON is moving quickly to draft improved terrorism legislation. Likewise, the judiciary probably would prosecute diligently any cases of terrorism and would cooperate with the USG in prosecution despite some of the institutional shortcomings of the judiciary, i.e. understaffing, corruption, lack of equipment, large caseloads and inadequate pay.

[1](#)D. (U) Extradition: The GON did not extradite any suspected terrorists or request extradition of any terrorists during the year.

[1](#)E. (U) Possible Impediments to Prosecution/ Extradition: There are no known legal impediments to prosecution or extradition of suspected terrorists. However, members of both the police force and the judiciary have been susceptible to corruption in the past. Given the high-level GON focus on counter-terrorism, it would be difficult for corrupt practices to impede the prosecution or extradition of any high visibility cases.

F. (U) Other Responses: The GON has drafted legislation, the Anti-Terrorism, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Act, containing explicit criminal sanctions against both terrorism and its financing. Not only does the Act expressly prohibit terrorism, it establishes an inter-agency commission with the mandate to coordinate GON anti-terrorist activities. In view of Nigeria's importance as an oil exporter (Nigeria accounts for ten percent of U.S. imports), the establishment of the Niger Delta Security Commission (NDSC) protects important American and other foreign economic interests in Nigeria. The NDSC's mission is to enhance the security of oil installations against possible terrorist attacks.

(U) The GON, through the Nigerian Central Bank, has made efforts to identify any terrorist financial assets in Nigeria. Thus far, none has been identified. Toward the later part of the year, Nigeria also began to work with the Financial Action Task Force to strengthen its overall anti-money laundering regime.

G. (U) International Fora: The GON gave clear diplomatic support in the UN and within ECOWAS to the counter-terrorism. President Obasanjo lent his support and prestige to President Wade's October Conference on Terrorism. Obasanjo also worked to include anti-terrorism as a major aspect of the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), the new institution which merges the pan-African development plans of Presidents Wade and Mbeki.

H. (U) The GON does not support international terrorism or terrorists. The GON clearly and repeatedly has condemned terrorism, followed up by concrete actions. However, some individuals in Nigeria and private groups here have ties to and perhaps receive funding from sources in Sudan, Iran, Pakistan and Libya. It is possible that some of these individuals or groups may have indirect links with extremist or terrorist organizations. There has been one unconfirmed press report of a Nigerian national fighting for the Taliban/Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The GON does not condone any such ties to terrorist groups.

(C) One of the September 11 terrorist hijacker's passport contained a Nigerian visa and entry and exit stamps. The Nigerian security services have informed us privately that the passport entries were forgeries probably obtained from a Nigerian criminal organization based outside the country.

I. (U) Public Statements: The GON has made no public statements supporting terrorism or any terrorist group. All GON statements have been against terrorism and supportive of the Coalition against the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Following a November 2 meeting in Washington with President Bush, President Obasanjo told a press conference that Nigeria considered itself a member of the anti-terrorism Coalition.

J. (U) Change In Posture: As a result of September 11, the GON has been more vocal in its opposition to terrorism.

K. (U) Bilateral Cooperation: The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) responded quickly to USG requests to identify and freeze terrorist assets if found in Nigeria. The CBN issued a Call Circular requiring all banks to identify any terrorist entities listed in Executive Order 13224. The CBN has amended the list several times to reflect USG additions. Although no assets have been found to date, the CBN requires the banks to continuously monitor accounts. The CBN also has implemented stricter customer identification procedures that require banks to maintain sufficient information about customers and correspondent financial institutions.

(U) By establishing the NDSC, mandated to protect oil installations from terrorist activity the GON is protecting U.S. economic and commercial interests. Additionally, the Nigerian Police and other security forces continue to cooperate to the fullest extent, given the restraints on their capabilities, in the area of combating terrorism and in protecting American citizen residents and USG personnel and installations.

L. (U) The U.S. Government has not sought the cooperation of the GON in the investigation or prosecution of an act of international terrorism in the past five years.

M. (U) Prevention of Terrorism: As stated in section K

above, GON security agencies have given their full cooperation in protecting U.S. citizens and interests from possible acts of terrorism. For example, the GON has provided enhanced and ongoing security for the Embassy and its related agencies. Also, the GON has given high priority to information sharing for security purposes.

Jeter